

# CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

## About Lead

### Who We Are and What We Do

Childhood lead poisoning remains a major preventable environmental health problem in the United States. About a million children younger than 6 years of age in the United States have blood lead levels of at least 10 micrograms per deciliter (ug/dL), a level high enough to adversely affect their intelligence, behavior and development. Minority and poor children are disproportionately affected.

The Lead Contamination Control Act of 1988 authorized CDC to initiate program efforts to eliminate childhood lead poisoning in the United States. As a result of this Act, CDC's Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch was created, with primary responsibility to:

- Develop programs and policies to prevent childhood lead poisoning.
- Educate the public and health-care providers about childhood lead poisoning.
- Provide funding to state and local health departments to determine the extent of childhood lead poisoning, screen children for elevated blood lead levels, help ensure that lead-poisoned infants and children receive medical and environmental follow-up, and develop neighborhood-based efforts to prevent childhood lead poisoning.
- Support research to determine the effectiveness of prevention efforts at federal, state and local levels.

Since its inception in 1990, CDC's lead poisoning prevention effort has helped:

- Initiate, develop and improve lead poisoning prevention programs in 39 states and in more than 150 counties and cities across the country.
- Identify more than 100,000 children with extremely high blood lead levels (20 ug/dL or higher), and expand the efforts to provide health education and medical follow-up for these children.
- Improve the number and quality of inspections of lead hazards in houses, especially in houses where lead-poisoned children live. Lead programs across the country now conduct an average of approximately 20,000 home inspections per year.
- Determine high-risk areas for lead poisoning, so programs can focus prevention, screening and hazard-remediation efforts.
- Develop comprehensive data management systems in state and local health departments so that they can ensure children with high blood lead levels receive timely follow-up care.
- Expand public laboratories in most states to analyze blood and environmental samples, so that timely and accurate analysis of samples can occur.

The goal of CDC is to eliminate childhood lead poisoning as a major public health problem. Screening children for lead poisoning will remain an essential activity until we have achieved the goal of primary prevention (eliminating hazards so that children are no longer exposed to lead and thus poisoned). Achieving this goal requires the partnership of federal and local governments and elements of the private sector involved in health, housing, and environmental activities. The multifaceted role of CDC is integral to this effort; it includes assisting state and local childhood lead poisoning prevention programs, providing a scientific basis for policy decisions, and ensuring that health issues are addressed in decisions about housing and the environment. We look forward to a time when children are no longer deprived of reaching their full potential because of being lead-poisoned.

## About the Program

### Grants for State- and Community-Based Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Programs

CDC provides funding to state and local health departments to:

- ▶ Determine the extent of childhood lead poisoning
- ▶ Screen children for elevated blood lead levels
- ▶ Help ensure that lead-poisoned infants and children receive medical and environmental follow-up
- ▶ Develop neighborhood-based efforts to prevent childhood lead poisoning

Grant-supported programs are expected to serve as catalysts and models for the development of non-grant-supported programs and activities in other states and communities. Further, grant-supported programs should create community awareness of the problem (e.g., among community and business leaders, the medical community, parents, educators, and property owners). Health departments are expected to work with interagency and community-based organizations that support the program agenda. These organizations may represent the interests of public health, the medical community, housing, business, labor, parents, and individual residents of the community. They may include, but are not limited to, neighborhood groups, churches, fraternal organizations, civic organizations, local businesses, and financial institutions who often have a vested interest in the viability of the community. Community organizations should be encouraged and supported in efforts to help in program components such as follow-up, education, and hazard remediation.

Currently, CDC funds are awarded to 40 state and 16 local health departments to develop and implement comprehensive lead poisoning prevention efforts. See [Key Contacts](#) for whom to contact regarding lead poisoning prevention in your state.

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### Funding Resources

- ▶ [CDC Funding](#) - Information about grant and cooperative agreement funding opportunities throughout CDC.
- ▶ [CDC Grants Forms](#) - Information and links to online forms.
- ▶ [Federal Register - 2000, 1999](#), - All Federal grants are first published in the Federal Register.
- ▶ [CDC Procurement and Grants Office \(PGO\)](#)

#### Source:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/about/about.htm> and  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/about/program.htm>